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RAFOS/Sec/16

All RAFOS Committee Members 24 Nov 16

**MINUTES OF THE 51ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY HELD AT ROYAL AIR FORCE HIGH WYCOMBE ON 19 NOV 16**

Present: Gp Capt M J Routledge Chairman

Gp Capt (Retd) K Cowieson FALO

Gp Capt (Retd) J C Knights Honorary Librarian

Wg Cdr (Retd) W G Francis Newsletter Editor and Social Media Advisor

FS S M Drinkel Publicity Member

Mr K W Earnshaw Journal Editor and Web Administrator

Mrs S F Earnshaw Treasurer

Mr C P Wearn Production Manager

And the members, listed at Annex A

Apologies had been received from Air Cdre (Retd) N Parton, Lt Cdr (Retd) J Springett, the Secretaries and the members listed at Annex B.

1. **Opening Remarks.** The Chairman welcomed all those present to RAF High Wycombe and thanked members for coming. He noted the apologies received from some committee members and wished Richard Knight a speedy recovery and return to full birding. He also explained that the President had retired from the RAF and would now formally become a life vice-president of the Society while continuing as Membership Secretary. The search for a successor as President was on going.

2. **Chairman’s Report.** The Chairman’s report is at Annex C.

3. **Minutes of the 50th AGM 2015**. The Minutes of the AGM 2015 were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: FS S M Drinkel

Seconded: Mr C P Wearn

Carried unanimously.

4. **Matters Arising.**

a. The Chairman had not had the opportunity to discuss the potential for getting RAFOS publicity through Forces TV and this action was carried forward as work in progress.

b. The Chairman had had the opportunity to discuss illegal bird trapping in Cyprus with the incoming Deputy Commander British Forces. The potential for bad publicity for the British Forces in Cyprus was well recognised. In debate it was noted that there had been action in the summer against illegal bird trapping but that the potential for action was limited by a number of factors including the use of local contractors to undertake clearance tasks which had previously been undertaken by the Royal Engineers.

5. **FALO’s Report.** The FALO’s report was well received and a copy of the main milestones is at Annex D. The Programme of events for 2017 was still under review but it was agreed that the main elements of WINTER DUCK, the Joint Services Ringing events including GIBEX and a visit to Steart Marsh instead of Chew Valley should go ahead. A new leader was being sought for the Norfolk weekend, but a team of Pete Evans, John Towers and Karen Sims had stepped forward to plan the Steart Marsh event. It was noted that if GIBEX were to include bird survey and casual birding as well as ringing a deputy leader to plan and co-ordinate these elements would be needed.

6. **Treasurer’s Report.** The Treasurers report is at Annex E.

a. It was noted that because invoices for Newsletter production in 2016 had not yet been received that income and expenditure for the year were broadly in balance.

b. Looking at the financial plan for the year ahead it was felt that provision for the Frank Walker Award appeared to be overly generous and this might provide some in-year relief.

c. Members noted that some who had elected to go paperless for Newsletters and other mailings were still receiving hard copy which must be costing the Society. The Chairman explained there had been a hiccup with the overall Membership list and reconciling it with the paperless list. It was hoped that this would all be ironed out before the next newsletter was distributed.

d. In an associated comment it was felt that we needed a more streamlined method for updating contact details – perhaps through the web site. The Web Administrator agreed to consider this idea and see if it could be achieved easily.

e. The provision of £200 for insurance was noted and the Chairman explained the requirement for Public Liability and Employer’s Insurance was being investigated with the RAF’s non-public funds experts. This sum was probably required but might also provide some welcome in-year relief.

f. The Chairman called for a vote on the allocation of Grants to expeditions but there was a counter proposal from the floor. In essence the suggestion was to vote a maximum spend figure for the year and thus allow a degree of flexibility in budget management to be decided by the Committee as the year unfolded. The proposal was therefore that expenditure in the forthcoming year should not exceed £3,500.

Proposed: Wg Cdr (retd) W G Francis

Seconded: FS S M Drinkel

Carried unanimously.

7. **Election of Officers.** The Committee positions of Publicity Member and Social Media Member were due for re-election. Both incumbents were prepared to stand again but any counter proposals from the floor were invited. In the absence of any other applicants the proposal was to re-elect FS S M Drinkel as Publicity Member and Wg Cdr (Retd) W G Francis as Social Media Member.

Proposed: Mr C P Wearn

Seconded: Sqn Ldr (Retd) R Yates

Carried unanimously.

8. **Committee Members Updates.**

a. **Watch the Birdy Project**. The Publicity Member updated the meeting with progress on the Watch the Birdy Project. There were 19 registered participants of whom 10 were very active. As a result 191 species had been photographed and many of the national Wildlife Trust areas had been visited. There was general agreement to give this project a final push to the end of the year.

b. **Other Reports.** There were no other verbal reports from the Committee and although invited to raise questions there were no issues from the floor. A report from the Newsletter and Social Media Member is at Annex F.

9. **Awards.**

a. The Committee had decided not to award the Frank Walker Award (FWA) this year.

*Secretary’s note: At the October Committee Meeting it had been decided to retain the strict criteria for the FWA but also to instigate a President’s Commendation which could be awarded to any worthy individuals at the AGM each year.*

b. Best Written Article – Sqn Ldr (Retd) M Hayes for his article ‘Falklands Third Time Lucky’.

c. Best UK photograph – FS S M Drinkel for a picture of a Sanderling in flight.

d. Best Overseas photograph – Sqn Ldr (Retd) R Yates for a picture of a Red-wattled Lapwing.

e. Best photograph by a novice – Mr P Evans for a picture of a Wood Sandpiper.

10. **AOB**

a. It was suggested from the floor that the Art Prize be re-introduced and the general consensus was that this would be a good idea. The Committee need not award the prize if entries were limited or of poor quality.

b. The Publicity member mentioned the branded merchandise that he was trying to sell off at discount prices.

c. It was agreed that the next AGM would be held at High Wycombe on 18 Nov 17.

*Released by internet*

M J ROUTLEDGE

Chairman

For RAFOS Secretary

Annexes:

A. Attendance List.

B. Apologies Received.

C. Chairman’s Report.

D. FALO’s Report.

E. Treasurer’s Report.

F. Newsletter and Social Media Member’s Report.